



National Transportation Safety Board

Marine Accident Brief

Fire On Board Fish Processing Vessel *Juno*

Accident no.	DCA14LM006
Vessel name	<i>Juno</i>
Accident type	Fire
Location	Grays Harbor, Westport, Washington
Date, time	December 28, 2013 0130 Pacific standard time (coordinated universal time – 8 hours)
Injuries	One minor
Damage	\$424,000
Environmental damage	None
Weather	Foggy with overcast skies, 45°F, winds 8 knots
Waterway information	Westport is located on a peninsula on the south side of the entrance to Grays Harbor, Washington, from the Pacific Ocean

In the early morning hours on Saturday, December 28, 2013, the 138-foot-long fish processing vessel *Juno* caught fire while moored at its pier in Westport, Washington. Shoreside firefighters extinguished the blaze, which caused extensive damage. The master received minor injuries, and no pollution was reported as a result of the fire.

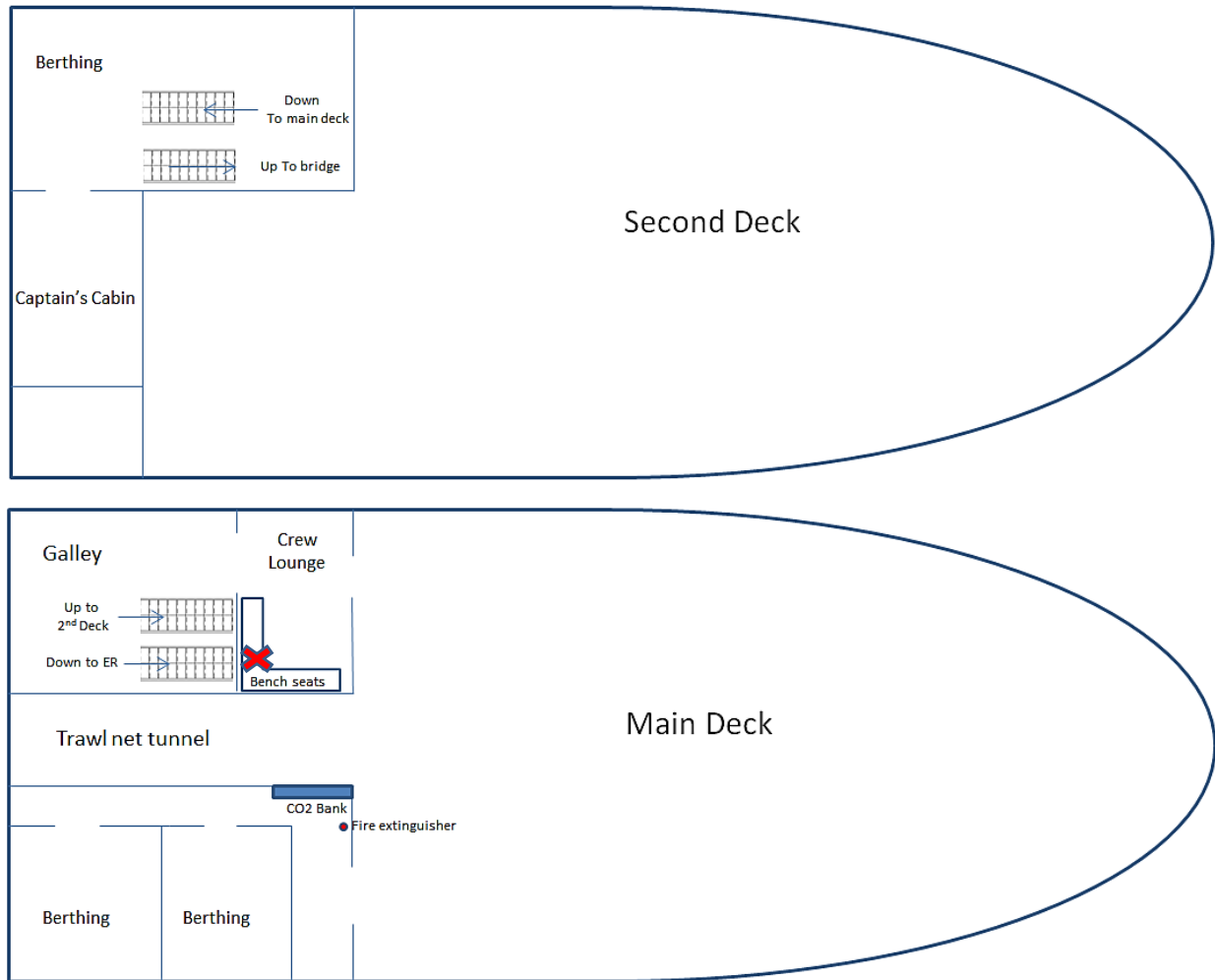


Fish processing vessel *Juno* under way. (Photo by Florian Kainz)

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Although the *Juno* was classified as a fish processing vessel, it operated as a fish tender, transporting fish and related products between fishing vessels, processors, and shore-based facilities. At the time of the accident, the vessel was moored in Westport for minor maintenance. The master was the only crewmember on board the vessel.

The *Juno*'s main deck aft was separated by a trawl net tunnel. On the port side was a crew lounge and galley. On the starboard side was a bank of CO₂ bottles and two berthing spaces. Access to the engine room, second deck, and bridge was by ladderways on the port side.



Deck plan for *Juno*. The bottom layout shows the main deck. The initial fire location is indicated by a red x. The top layout shows the second deck, immediately above the main deck.

The master told investigators that on Friday, December 27, he rented some movies and came back to the vessel to watch them in his cabin, located on the second deck on the starboard side. He estimated that he fell asleep watching movies around midnight and awoke about 0130 to the smell of smoke. He went down the ladder to the main deck and found the aft bulkhead in the crew lounge on fire above a built-in bench seating area.

The master retrieved a fire extinguisher from the CO₂ room on the main deck starboard side and discharged it on the fire with no effect. He then activated the engine room CO₂ system and discharged five bottles, which also failed to suppress the fire. The master determined the fire was out of control, so he abandoned ship to the pier. The fire spread quickly through the house from the main deck up to the second deck and bridge.

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The local fire department was notified at 0134 by security for Ocean Gold Seafoods, a processing facility adjacent to the *Juno*'s berth. Firefighters arrived at 0140 and began to battle the fire. One fire engine was dispatched initially, backed up by a second engine unit at 0148. Firefighters requested Coast Guard assistance at 0228 to provide waterside firefighting, and a motor lifeboat from Station Grays Harbor arrived at 0255. The fire was extinguished at 0424, reflash at 0718, and was completely extinguished at 0819.

The master went to a hospital following the fire complaining of smoke inhalation and chest pain and was released the next day.

The fire department report stated, "A lack of built-in 'structural fire stops' in the vessel . . . created a chimney effect which allowed superheated gases to spread to the cabin areas." In addition, the report found that modifications made to the vessel using combustible interior finishes such as plywood and wood paneling contributed to the fire's propagation.

An insurance company surveyor examined the vessel after the incident and identified the source of the fire as an electrical short in a built-in AC space heater within the bench seating in the crew lounge. The seating area was also used for storage, and multiple combustible materials were kept near the heater, including a container of paint, paint thinner, and a propane cylinder. The surveyor concluded that "the combustible materials stowed in very close proximity to the heater resulted in excessive heat build-up and igniting of the combustible materials."

The vessel sustained major fire damage to the house on the main deck, the second deck, and the bridge. The only portion of the house not affected was the starboard side main deck, which was separated from the fire by the trawl tunnel.



Fire damage to exterior of house on port side.

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A Coast Guard investigator stands in the charred remains of the bridge, starboard side.

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause of the fire on the fish processing vessel *Juno* was a space heater that experienced an electrical fault (short circuit). Contributing to the extent of the fire's damage was the improper stowage of flammable materials near the heater. Also contributing was the vessel's lack of structural fire protection and use of combustible materials in interior finishes.

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Vessel Particulars

Vessel	<i>Juno</i>
Owner/operator	Juno Tendering, LLC
Port of registry	Westport, WA
Flag	United States
Type	Fish processing vessel
Year built	1950
Official number (US)	260614
IMO number	8949317
Construction	Steel
Length	138.0 ft (42.06 m)
Draft	12.0 ft (3.66 m)
Beam/width	30.1 ft (9.17 m)
Tonnage	199 gross tons, 119 ITC* tons
Engine power, manufacturer	750 hp (559.5 kW) Caterpillar - 398TA (V-12 cylinder)
Persons on board	1

*Tonnage according to International Tonnage Convention

For more details about this accident, visit www.nts.gov/investigations/dms.html and search for NTSB accident ID DCA14LM006.

Adopted: February 23, 2015

The NTSB has authority to investigate and establish the probable cause of any major marine casualty or any marine casualty involving both public and nonpublic vessels under 49 *United States Code* 1131. This report is based on factual information either gathered by NTSB investigators or provided by the Coast Guard from its informal investigation of the accident.

The NTSB does not assign fault or blame for a marine casualty; rather, as specified by NTSB regulation, “[NTSB] investigations are fact-finding proceedings with no formal issues and no adverse parties . . . and are not conducted for the purpose of determining the rights or liabilities of any person.” 49 *Code of Federal Regulations*, Section 831.4.

Assignment of fault or legal liability is not relevant to the NTSB’s statutory mission to improve transportation safety by conducting investigations and issuing safety recommendations. In addition, statutory language prohibits the admission into evidence or use of any part of an NTSB report related to an accident in a civil action for damages resulting from a matter mentioned in the report. 49 *United States Code*, Section 1154(b).
